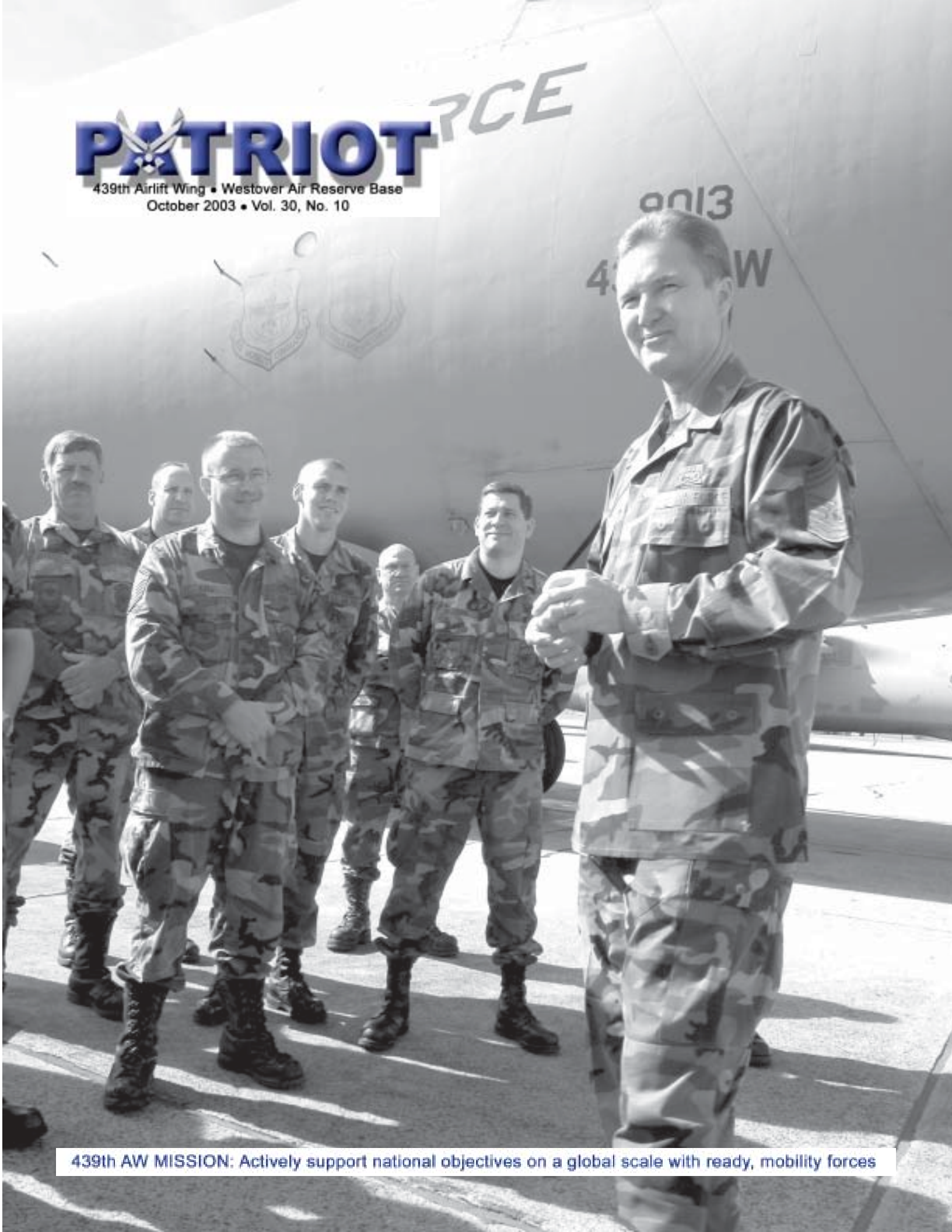


PATRIOT

439th Airlift Wing • Westover Air Reserve Base
October 2003 • Vol. 30, No. 10



439th AW MISSION: Actively support national objectives on a global scale with ready, mobility forces

A busy beginning

"Welcome to Westover."

My wife Kim and I have heard those words many times in the last few weeks since we arrived here. We have found that you all really mean it because we truly feel welcomed into the Westover family! We want to say thanks for that welcome, and for all the help you have given us as we try to get settled in Massachusetts. I also want to tell you how impressed we are with the people in the 439th AW. Everywhere I have been on base the quality and pride you all have is very evident. It makes me proud and humble to be your commander.

September was a very busy month – just like every other month for the last two years. We celebrated Family Day with our usual picnic on the UTA. Although this was my first here, I can tell you from past experience at other bases, this was one of the best I have seen. I know our reservists and their families had a great time and I think I enjoyed my time in the dunk tank. Hats off to the Chiefs Council, the Galaxy Community Council, and everyone who worked hard to make Family Day happen!

On a more somber note, we also observed the second anniversary of the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001. We paid tribute to the victims of that tragedy and to the men and women who risked their lives trying to save others. We also thanked all the organizations and individuals who gave their time, money, and services to support our troops over the last two years. It was a very moving, meaningful event and I want to thank everyone who helped put it together.

September also marks the two-year point for many of our activated reservists. In addition, many of you have been on active duty for over a year, and several hundred of you deployed to some real garden spots around the world. I know the sacrifices you have made during this time, in both your personal and professional lives and I want to thank all of you for those sacrifices. I also want to thank your families and employers for the hardships they have endured in order for you to answer the call when your country needed you.

Finally, I want to let you know how excited I am to be your commander. This is truly a great wing and a super base and I look forward to leading you through the challenges of the future!

by Col. Wade Farris
439th Airlift Wing commander



Briefs

Air Force survey includes reservists for first time

ROBINS AFB, Ga. – This year, for the first time, the Air Force Climate Survey will include all Air Force reservists.

Feedback from last year's study, formerly the Air Force Chief of Staff Survey, prompted the Air Force to involve a larger audience in the survey, which will seek factors affecting the day-to-day mission, leadership and availability of resources. Results of the online survey will serve as the baseline for the Total Force.

This year's survey runs from Oct. 1 to Nov. 23. The survey will seek input on issues from every major level of the Air Force – from Headquarters Air Force in the Pentagon to squadrons and flights.

The survey will also provide anonymity with software masking techniques that do not attach the respondent's user ID and password to survey responses.

The results of the survey will be released in February 2004 to unit leaders.

More information about the survey can be found at <http://afclimatesurvey.af.mil>, or by calling Lt. Col. Armand Tourangeau or CMSgt. Kathy Wood at Ext. 2876.

(AFRC News Service)

Two new squadrons to stand up Oct. 1

Two new squadrons will soon be part of the Patriot Wing. The 439th Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS) and 439th Maintenance Operations Squadron (MOS) will stand up on Oct. 1.

Lt. Col. Jacquelyn B. Crothers will command the 439th LRS, while Maj. Carlos Hill will head up the 439th MOS, said Maj. Robert W. Thompson, logistics plans officer.

The mission of the LRS will be to support flying operations with ground transportation, aircraft parts and fuel. An additional key function of the LRS is the readiness flight, to be managed by the squadron's new operations officer, Lt. Col. Forrest D. Price, Thompson said.

Among the missions of the MOS are planning, scheduling and documentation, controlling daily maintenance operations, aircraft scheduling, engine management, maintenance analysis, and computer management.

Cover photo

VISITING THE TROOPS - CMSAF
Gerald R. Murray visits with members of the 439th AMXS on the flight line on Sept. 7 (see stories and additional photo on page 3).

— photo by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

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Flag ceremony pays tribute to 9/11 heroes



CONGRESSMAN COMMENTS - Congressman Richard E. Neal speaks to the audience and a formation of Westover reservists during the 9/11 ceremony at the base ellipse.

- photos by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe



FLAG FAREWELL - Members of the Patriot Wing Honor Guard and the American Legion properly dispose of the American flag on Sept. 11 during the flag retirement ceremony. This Stars and Stripes had flown over the base since Sept. 11, 2001.

CMSAF Murray tours Patriot Wing's offices, flight line

by Maj. Wilson Camelo
and SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

The Air Force's top-ranking enlisted man visited Westover in September to see first-hand how the Patriot Wing operates.

In top-to-bottom fashion, CMSAF Gerald R. Murray toured offices, buildings and the flight line to meet the men and women of the 439th AW during the A UTA.

Murray rode around the base with Command CMSgt. Jeffrey B. Sherwin during his visit from his office at the Pentagon. In what was often impromptu fashion, Murray took questions from airmen about

such issues as the Air Force's new physical fitness standards, TRICARE, AEF cycles, deployments, and much more. As the highest-ranking noncommissioned officer in the Air Force, Murray provides direction for the enlisted corps, represents their interests, and serves as the personal adviser to the Air Force chief of staff and secretary on all issues regarding the welfare, readiness, morale, and proper utilization and progress of the enlisted force.

Murray attended Saturday's commanders call, where most of his comments reflected on what he had learned since touching down on Westover's runway. He addressed the audience telling the reservists

see CMSAF on page 10



photo by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

CHIEF CHATS - CMSAF Gerald R. Murray, left, talks with SSgt. Theresa M. Needham, 439th CES, during his visit to the annual wing picnic on Sept. 6. Also pictured is 439th AW Command CMSgt. Jeffrey B. Sherwin.

CMSAF Murray discusses fitness standards, uniforms

EDITOR'S NOTE: CMSAF Gerald R. Murray interviewed with SSgt. Andrew S. Biscoe from the 439th AW Public Affairs Office during the September A UTA.

Chief Murray, What is your outlook on pay and benefits for reservists?

Our reservists have certainly been doing a lot more in our Air Force in recent years.

We've had success already in many ways in being able to raise our pay levels. In fact in the past three years across the Air Force, we've been able to get pay and benefit increases more so than we've had in many years in the past. But that said, we also have to work our pay and compensation through the Office of the Secretary of Defense and it is through them (that staff) and across the services that we work to determine what those pay and allowances are.

see QUESTIONS on page 4

Patriot Wing major's unit helps following U.N. bombing

by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

Less than three months after taking command of the 42nd APS, Maj. Thomas deployed across the globe to command another unit in the heart of Baghdad, Iraq.



Maj. Thomas

The major is the commander of the 447th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron (ELRS) at Baghdad International Airport.

Less than three weeks after arriving in Iraq, the real-world impact of the mission quickly became apparent when the

U.N. headquarters in Baghdad was bombed Aug. 19 killing 22, including special envoy Sergio Vieira de Mello.

While President Bush declared major combat operations over in Iraq on May 1, the major is among thousands of American men and women helping to keep the peace in that country. In a recent e-mail, the major recounted some of the aspects of his tour of duty at Baghdad International Airport.

"Our base was highly involved with the evacuation of casualties and with mortuary affairs," he said. "We have a combat search and rescue squadron here, and they played a big role trying to rescue survivors."

"I have more than 160 people that represent the aerial port, fuels, supply, logistics plans, and vehicle operations," he said. "This is the busiest base in Iraq and (in) much of this area." He provided statistics to show his unit's hard work, which he said is performed in soaring temperatures daily.

"In August we handled 18,188 passengers and 14,225 tons of cargo," the major said. "It is

very hot here. Most days max out at 120 on our outside thermometer. It is well over that on the flight line - I am told over 140."

When it's time for a break from the flight line, no one can let their guard down, he said. "There isn't a day that goes by that I don't hear of attacks on American service members within a few miles of here in the Baghdad area."

His crisp language in his e-mail from thousands of miles away told the story his deployment to Iraq.

"The pace is like nowhere I have ever been. Then you add to that the heat and the local threat. It has also been one of the most rewarding experiences. We are able to make an impact on the war effort every day."

The Air Force Reserve also recognized his service to his country. In early September, Major Thomas received the news he would be pinning on lieutenant colonel.

QUESTIONS continued from page 3

I can't specifically say what exactly is on the high horizon right now but I know that we're looking at improvements in medical care, in some of the pay areas, and BAH. There's certainly no promise of it, but it looks like those are things that will be on the scope here in the coming year - things that we'll bring through OSD and hopefully get to Congress.

Regarding health and dental care for reservists and the families not on active duty and when activated: are problems with insurance being worked out?

Yes. We have had some success in being able to get some TRICARE prime coverage for those that have been activated now for the 30-day versus the 179-day time period. But again, we looked at the fact that there are probably some more improvements.

That's where we've got to go back and take a look at it across the services, work through OSD and the Congress, but it does show that there is concern certainly within the service and with Congress as well and that's a good sign we'll continue to improve health care.

Are the new fitness standards going to be introduced to reservists next year, and if so, what is the strategy if a person fails? Please discuss the increased emphasis on physical fitness and the warrior culture.

Yes, standards are going to apply to the reserve starting Jan. 1. But reserve leadership is now going over it as we continue to finalize what those standards will be in the last pieces of the Air Force instruction.

Reserve command is certainly involved in that process to look at and see how that will be adapted to the reserve. We clearly recognize that the reserve has some challenges that the active component does not have.

But our focus is not so much on assessment as it is on improving that through teamwork. It's a commander-led program. The expectation from General Jumper is that we lead this through our officers and our NCOs. That's why I spend a lot of time talking to senior NCOs. Our responsibility as

senior NCOs is to lead our force in improving our health and fitness, not to just leave it on the individual, him or herself. However, the individual will know that the standard has to be met.

People joining the guard or reserve for the benefits and thinking there's no chance they'll get deployed is quickly becoming a thing of the past. Does that translate into recruiting challenges? New messages? New strategies for recruiting and retaining our top people?

Historically we have seen after wars or operations that our reserve manning goes down. If you go back to the world wars and Korea we found that we basically wiped out the reserve and had to start all over again because all the reserve were called up and stayed on active duty. We had to rebuild the reserves after those.

Certainly that was not the case in the most recent example - Desert Storm. We saw that our reserve manpower was reduced by those that separated from it. So that gives us concern now as we look at this - after another major operation in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

One cannot minimize the impact upon our nation and our forces from Sept. 11, and the commitment that we all have in this. So while we're concerned, yes, we are, we watch that very closely. That goes back into making sure that we also work on those pay and benefits and equitable types of things we can provide our reservists.

We have increased entry-level bonuses for our recruiting. We have increased the usage of selective reenlistment bonuses on the active component. But one of the benefits for the reservists is that we have increased the length of time that they have to use their GI Bill - from 10 to 14 years.

We have recognized clearly over the past two years that as we have continued to activate a lot of reservists for a lot longer period of time than we'd like to, that we've got to reduce that.

Two months ago, in Operation Iraqi Freedom, we were looking at both our guard and reserve together - we had over 26,000 on active duty. Today we have fewer than 13,000. We continue to demobilize our forces.

Because we do recognize the great value of

how the reservists have to balance the time with not only their families but the civilian employer and the Air Force and their military service time. So we're very conscious of that.

When can reservists expect the new uniforms? What is your reaction to them? We here have heard negative anecdotal reactions to the pictures of the uniforms.

It's important to recognize that this is a wear and fit test. It is not the introduction of the new uniform. In January, reserve units at Robins, Wright-Patterson, and McChord Air Force bases will have the opportunity to see that uniform and will see members wear that uniform.

The uniform will go through a wear and fit test from the January to July next year. From that test and from anyone that wants to make inputs, there will be a web site for people to make comments.

Inputs will be collected for a decision to be made probably about a year from now from General Jumper. I would look for the fall of 2004 to be the decision on the uniform - whether General Jumper accepts all, some, or none of the uniform.

We must remember, and what most people comment on, have to do with the color of the uniform. This uniform came about by a long period of study, analysis, and feedback from our people.

It is a distinctive uniform for the airmen of the 21st century. It is also a uniform designed to wear better, fit better, and last longer than uniforms that we've had in the past. It's permanent press, it is one material versus two materials that we have today, winter weight and summer weight. It has both male and female sizes and it has sizes to fit our waistlines and in-seams, unlike the ones we have today that are large-medium, medium-large, medium-small types of that adjust.

It's a wash and wear fabric and so it will not require professional laundering. There's no starching. You put it in the washing machine, put it in the dryer, put it on.

So if it's accepted, then we would be looking at from '05 to '08 to bring the uniform in.

Deployments keep maintainers, aerial porters on the move



Courtesy photo

OPS BRIEF - CMSgt. Bruce explains his unit's operations to Lt. Gen. Ronald E. Keys, Air Force deputy chief of staff for air and space operations.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Air Force Reserve Command security guidelines prohibit the use of last names of deployed reservists in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

**by MSgt. Tom Allocco
and SSgt. Andrew Biscoe**

Despite the downturn in flying operations at Westover with the winding down of the C-5 surge in June, Patriot Wing members continued to be deployed across the globe in August and September. The affected units include aerial port, maintenance and the 439th AMDS.

About 100 Westover maintainers left here on Sunday of the September A UTA to support Iraqi Freedom airlift operations out of Dover AFB, Del.

Before leaving, the members of the 439th Maintenance Squadron and 439th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron were told to expect to work 12-hour shifts due to the heavy workload at Dover. The 436th AW at Dover requested the maintenance support for a 90 day period.

The Westover maintainers deployed to Dover under Maj. Mark F. Wilson. CMSgt. John J. Tavares is senior NCOIC and MSgt. Earl E. Duncan Jr. is first sergeant.

EOD team helps disarm unexploded ordinance in Iraq

by SrA. T.R. Ouellette

Three members of the Patriot Wing's 439th Explosive Ordnance Disposal are serving at a forward-deployed location helping to make it safe.

Westover's TSgt. Keith, TSgt. Tom, and SSgt. Art joined with SrA Jon from Dobbins ARB, Ga., to form a team responsible for finding and destroying unexploded ordnance at Tallil Air Base in southern Iraq. They arrived at their deployment site on July 12.

According to e-mail from the deployed troops, most of the ordnance is actually from Operation Desert Storm when coalition forces dropped a significant amount on an Iraqi airbase. Since then, the enemy abandoned the airbase and left the live ordnance intact.

Korean and Italian EOD units are assisting Westover's EOD unit.

Because the 439th EOD unit is working with other nations' teams, additional training

was necessary. For this reason and others, the Westover unit was actually activated in April and sent to Barnes, Fort Devens, and a FBI training center in Arizona for training purposes prior to their deployment which is expected to last until Thanksgiving.

Complicating their duties is the Iraqi heat. Since their arrival, temperatures have averaged well over 100 degrees, sometimes hitting into the high 120s, said SSgt. Art. Members must also wear their body armor and helmets, increasing their discomfort.

To beat the heat, the EOD specialists begin work early every morning, continuously sweeping and cleaning areas surrounding their base, and destroying any discovered ordnance, SSgt. Art said.

This marks the second year in a row the 439th EOD unit has been activated, said 1st Lt. Jason E. Rose, EOD flight commander. They were first activated here after 9/11, but the Iraq deployment is the first operational deployment for the unit, he said.

Five members of the 439th Aerospace Medicine Squadron were scheduled to deploy to Dover on Sept. 15 for a 30-day tour assisting at the 439th AW Clinic. Doctor (Lt. Col.) Michael A. Palmer was scheduled to lead the team of 2nd Lt. Stacey L. Balicki, nurse; MSgt. Jean M. Allison, medical services specialist; MSgt. Lisa R. Laudenslager, health services management specialist; and SrA Matthew B. Dallachie, medical services specialist.

Members of the 42nd Aerial Port Squadron deployed to Uzbekistan in late August. CMSgt. Bruce recently e-mailed to report on his unit's activities there.

"We took a 24 person team to K-2," he said. "It took 54 hours to get here from bus to civilian aircraft to the rotator and back again to a C-130 for intra theater airlift to K-2. We moved through seven different either civilian or military airfields to get here. The team was pretty exhausted upon arrival, but we were on shift within 20 hours and had full control of the port within 48 hours!"

The chief described the Uzbekistan as warm, but not near the searing heat that troops are dealing with in Iraq.

"It is sunny every day right around 100 degrees and cools to just under 80 at night," he said. The troops are billeted in three different tents with air conditioning.

"Showers and toilets are in tents...you walk everywhere so everyone is going to be ready for the new Air Force fitness standards. We are working 12-hour shifts...we get up every morning between 4 and 5 and PT voluntarily up until breakfast at 0600, then showers and off to work."

Aircraft activity keeps the chief's troops plenty busy, he said. "The airflow is keeping the flight line guys out on the ramp most of the shift." The Westover aerial porters work directly with the Army to move their cargo in and out of theater.

"Most of the mission here is in direct support of the war on terrorism...we feel that we are now in the fight with direct support missions for Army teams in the AOR," the chief said. "We have already been complemented by the Army for an emergency re-supply mission that needed cargo to be downrange. The 42nd APS deployed stepped up and had the plane loaded and airborne within an hour and the troops had an airdrop in 30 minutes of critical cargo!"

The chief closed his e-mail with saying that morale is good with his group. "The team is in very high spirits and motivated! We are scheduled to return between Christmas and New Years..."



Courtesy photo

CLEAN-UP CREW - EOD team members stand in front of a poster of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein. They are, from left, TSgt. Thomas, SSgt. Art, and TSgt. Keith.



CCATT IN ACTION - Lt. Col. Stanley (left) and Capt. Shawn monitor a patient on a C-17 transport enroute to Europe from Southwest Asia. The 439th ASTS reservists are deployed as Critical Care Air Transport Team (CCATT) members.

CCATT members, families stay close despite separation

EDITOR'S NOTE: Air Force Reserve Command security guidelines prohibit the use of last names of deployed reservists in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

by SMSgt. Sandi Michon

They couldn't save his arm, but they helped save his life.

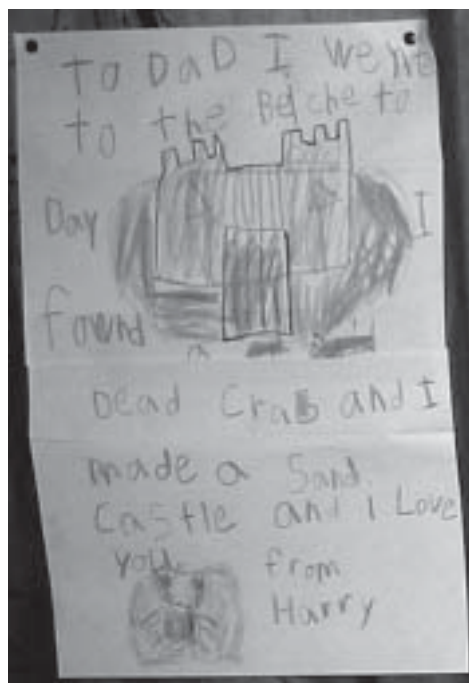
That's the follow-up report on a critically-injured patient recently airlifted by three members of Westover's 439th Aeromedical Staging Squadron deployed to Southwest Asia.

Serving on a 122-day deployment, Lt. Col. Stanley, Capt. Shawn and TSgt. Richard comprise a Critical Care Air Transport Team (CCATT) providing onboard medical care usually between Southwest Asia and Europe.

Critical care is challenging in any venue, but can be more so at 30,000 feet in a C-130 or C-17 with limited resources. "The patient that lost his arm had been shot in the chest during a firefight," said the colonel, 439th ASTS flight surgeon and civilian emergency room physician. "Damage to a major blood vessel affected blood flow to the arm," he explained. "With IV lines, multiple tubes and a ventilator, he kept us busy," he said, adding that most of their flights average between 10-12 hours. The captain and the sergeant round out the team as critical care nurse and cardio-pulmonary technician respectively.



FATHER PHOTOS - Karen Chartoff (center), reviews deployment photos with her children Ruthie and Harry to help them cope with their father's absence. The Chartoffs attended the Family Picnic at Westover in September.



THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES - A drawing from his 7-year-old son adorns the plywood wall in Lt. Col. Stanley's tent in Southwest Asia. A missed excursion to the beach is just one of the many sacrifices made by deployed reservists.

photo courtesy of Lt. Col. Stanley

All three deployed in June and, when not flying missions, support the U.S. Army Contingency Support Hospital (CSH) in theater. The colonel helps with patient rounds and is planning an advanced cardiac life support class. In addition, the team offloads arriving patients when the aircrew is required to stay on the aircraft.

This is the second CCATT deployment for the colonel and the captain and the first for the sergeant. Living conditions are austere at the army facility with tents, portapotties and trailer showers. They carry a sidearm at all times.

According to the CCATT members, morale is high during an actual mission, but the slower tempo between missions is actually harder. It might be because there is more time to think of home. "It's hard missing events in my children's life," said the colonel, and added that he recently missed his daughter's first day of kindergarten. The team keeps in touch with home through daily e-mails, frequent phone

see CCAT on page 8

Finally, sunny weather beams down on annual Family Day



FAMILY FEAST - Families gather at the food line during the 439th AW annual picnic on Sept. 6. New England's finicky weather, which turned most of summer 2003's weekends into washouts, finally provided blue skies and warm temperatures for the events.



SPRROING! - Kids compete in the rubber band race during the annual Family Day, set up and managed by the Westover Chiefs Council.



YOU SAID IT - Firefighter Joe entertains families as he performs his ventriloquist routine.

The 439th AW thanks the following picnic sponsors: Galaxy Community Council, American Legion Post 275, Beachell's Hayride, Catholic Charities, Child Identification Program (CHIPS), City of Springfield Department Heads, Fielding Family Amusements, Hampshire County Radio Controllers, Lego Inc., Milton Bradley Corp., and the Pioneer Valley USO.

- photos by TSgt. Andrew Reitano

CHIEFS COUNCIL - The Westover Chiefs' Council provides management assistance to the 439th AW commander and to its fellow enlisted personnel. Council members get involved with such topics as retention, morale, and work environments. The chiefs work with unit commanders, first sergeants, and the Junior Enlisted

Advisory Council to resolve concerns. The council handles the management of the wing's annual Family Day, sits on awards and promotions boards, and much more. For more information on the council, contact any chief at Westover.

New service-commitment directive for reservists takes effect Oct. 1

by SSgt. Jeff Schoen
AFRC News Service

ROBINS AFB, Ga. – Starting Oct. 1, Air Force Reserve Command will implement a comprehensive, service-commitment directive for certain kinds of training, education and promotions.

“The Reserve Service Commitment Policy accomplishes two goals,” said Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III, commander of AFRC. “First, the RSC ensures a fair and equitable return to the Air Force Reserve and the American taxpayers.

Second, it communicates to our members the period of obligated service they must complete before becoming eligible to separate, transfer or retire from the Selected Reserve.”

The policy affects reservists in the Selected Reserve, the Individual Ready Reserve’s Health Professions Scholarship Program and the IRR’s Financial Assistance Program.

The RSC includes unit program reservists, individual mobilization augmentees and members of the Active Guard and Reserve.

Air Force reservists in the rank of colonel and below incur a service obligation if they attend formal training or education for 20 weeks or longer, receive a promotion in the top three enlisted grades or enlist in the service for the first time.

“In the past, a member under certain circumstances could attend initial training, complete a formal school, return to their Air Force Reserve assignment and request reassignment to inactive status without completely fulfilling their commitment,” said Lt. Col. Paul W. Kirby, chief of the Personnel Programs and Training Division in the Office of the Air Force Reserve, Washington, D.C. “Everyone wins when a member acquires new skills through training and education, but the Air Force Reserve loses if members leave prematurely.”

The Air Force Reserve has had policies that attempted to address service commitments and training in certain career fields, such as pilots and health care professionals, but these policies often lacked the “teeth” needed to enforce them, said Kirby.

“This policy standardizes, streamlines and provides the means to enforce the various commitment policies by providing a single-source document that clearly communicates the required commitments to the members,” Kirby said.

“We worked hard to create a system that treats people fairly, and I believe our reservists are people of honesty and integrity who will live up to their commitments.”

Reservists with questions about the service-commitment policy may contact Capt. Kelly R. Braudis at Ext. 2993 or CMSgt. Tammy H. Vezina at Ext. 3428.

All three women attended Westover’s Family Day Picnic in September, and it was the first time Sarah Beth actually met the other women face-to-face. They admitted that television coverage heightens their fear, but also helps them realize the important nature of the deployment. They were all willing to sacrifice to support the deployment. The captain’s wedding anniversary celebration in October will have to be postponed. She joked that she’d go out and celebrate with the girls, referring to Karen and Sarah Beth.

Karen says she and her husband do all

Reserve compiles list of obligations

ROBINS AFB, Ga. – Reservists and those planning to join the Air Force Reserve will incur a service obligation for certain kinds of training, education and promotions starting Oct. 1.

Affected areas include:

- Undergraduate pilot training – 10 years.
- Undergraduate navigator training – six years.
- Non-prior service enlistment – six years or term of enlistment.
- In-residence doctoral medical/dental education or technical training for 20 weeks or longer – five years concurrent with other service commitments.
- Line, chaplain and judge advocate officer commissioning from the Academy of Military Science, McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tenn., and Officer Training School, Maxwell AFB, Ala. – four years.
- In-residence advanced flying training – three years.
- In-residence Air Force weapons instructor course – three years for all Air Force specialty codes.
- Officer in-residence professional military education at intermediate or senior service school – three years.
- Direct accession of health profession officer – three years minimum term of service.
- Promotions to E-7, E-8 and E-9 – two years or date of high year of tenure, whichever is less. Commissioned officer promotions are not affected per the Reserve Officer Personnel Management Act.
- Enlisted in-residence professional military education – two years.
- Squadron Officer School, and Air and Space Basic Course, Maxwell AFB, Ala. – one year.

(AFRC News Service)

calls and sporadic snail mail.

Back home, loved ones cope by helping each other. Karen Chartoff and Capt. Maureen McCann-Howard compare notes almost daily searching for additional shreds of information about their husbands. The two “deployment veterans” stay in touch with the sergeant’s girlfriend, Sarah Beth Robinson. McCann-Howard, a psychiatric nurse with the 439th ASTS, serves as support and military interpreter for Karen and Sarah Beth. “I translate the ‘militarese,’” laughed the captain who has served at Westover since 1999.

they can to ease the strain on their children. Besides talking with their dad on the phone weekly, Ruthie, 5, and Harry, 7, watch pre-recorded videos of them and their dad playing prior to his deployment. The colonel also prepared cassette tapes of read-aloud books for his children and sends photos that his kids keep by their beds. “We cuddle a lot,” says Karen. “I tell them it’s okay to miss Daddy. I miss him too.”

The feeling is mutual. The makeshift plywood wall in the colonel’s tent is “wallpapered” with the drawings they send to him.

Family health plan expands to Springfield area this fall

BOSTON – The Military Health System’s US Family Health Plan is expanding to the greater Springfield area this fall, giving thousands of residents access to the TRICARE Prime option available to families of active-duty military, retirees and their eligible family members.

According to David Chicoine, Executive Director, the US Family Health Plan has contracted with RiverBend Medical Group, a multi-specialty group practice affiliated with Baystate Medical Center and Mercy Hospital.

RiverBend Medical Group has locations in Springfield, Chicopee, Westfield and Agawam.

Under the plan, members receive the full TRICARE Prime benefit, which includes preventive care, emergency treatment, hospitalization, and prescription benefits.

Active-duty family members, as well as retirees and their depen-

dents with Medicare Part B who join the Plan, receive virtually free healthcare, and pay no enrollment fees or co-payments for covered medical services except for prescriptions.

Retirees and their dependents without Part B pay an annual enrollment fee of \$230 for individual coverage, \$460 for family coverage, and have modest co-payments for most medical services.

In addition to TRICARE benefits, US Family Health Plan members have access to special value-added benefits such as chiropractic care, massage therapy, and discounts on eyewear and fitness centers.

Information about US Family Health Plan and RiverBend Medical Group is available at www.usfamilyhealthplan.org and www.riverbendmedical.com.

Activated reservists can also call the TRICARE office at Hanscom AFB, Mass., for more information. Its number is (781) 377-4715.

USO hauls supplies around base in first electric car

by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

Turn the key and there's no noise. It's quieter and smaller than the average car, and there's no need for a fill-up.

The age of the electric car arrived at Westover in August when Pioneer Valley USO Director Sandra A. Wakefield drove the Global Electric Motorcar across Westover for the first time. The futuristic car quickly brought a new mobility advantage to the USO's doorstep.

"It's much easier now," Wakefield said,

as she stepped out of the car. "If somebody came to the gate before, we'd have to either bring them on the base or transport the goods in private cars. This way we can just put things on, and bring it right over here."

MSgt. Stephen A. Perreault, 439th LSS NCOIC of vehicle operations, secured the car for the USO. He saw the electric cars featured in a local newspaper, and asked Wakefield if it was something the USO staff would like. Wakefield quickly took Perreault up on it.

"I spoke to my board of directors ... they

thought it was a wonderful idea," she said.

Perreault called William C. Conner, a professor at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, to arrange the purchase of the electric car. He told Conner about the busy USO food bank at Westover. His pitch to Conner was successful.

While the car originally carries a \$9,200 price tag, Wakefield paid a \$1,000 donation to Conner's company that supports food banks. Conner is founder of Robin Food Ltd., a nonprofit Maryland-based organization that received 50 of the electric cars from the Daimler-Chrysler Corp.

Since the cars can only be driven on roadways with posted speed limits of 35 mph or less, Perreault found a local towing company to tow the electric car to the base. Chuck's Towing of Chicopee volunteered to take the car from Amherst on one of its flatbed trucks to the base. "That would have been probably over \$100," Perreault said. "When I talked to the owner and mentioned the USO, he said 'no problem, when do you need it?'"

The car includes an automatic transmission and a 72-volt DC motor engine that runs on six "deep well" batteries. Like plugging in a cell phone, Wakefield connects the car to a plug in the side of Bldg. 1100 to recharge its batteries overnight. Its range is about 30 miles on a full charge.

The USO is in Bldg. 1100 on Walker Avenue, where the chapel and family services offices are housed as well. Wakefield said the staffs of those offices may also use the vehicle for errands on base.



photo by SMSgt. Marilyn Dube

TUNE-UP - MSgt. Stephen A. Perreault, 439th LSS vehicle operations NCOIC, checks one of the wheels of the USO's new Global Electric Motorcar before its first errand run.

Fire damages most of National Guard helicopter hangar

by Gordon Newell

Fire heavily damaged a metal hangar used by the Massachusetts National Guard shortly before midnight on Aug. 13.

The blaze was first spotted by Westover flight line security forces. Westover firefighters were first on the scene followed minutes later by Chicopee firefighters. No one was injured.

Because of the firefighters' quick actions, six nearby helicopters were spared any damage from the flames.

Westover Fire Chief Charles Van Gorden said base firefighters and members of the Army National Guard's aviation support unit used a fire truck and rope to pull the four UH-1 Hueys and two OH-58 Kiowas to safety.

Van Gorden said Westover firefighters smashed a nearby door, climbed some stairs, and assessed the damage. "It had a pretty good start on us ... with the floor already burned out," he said. It took nearly three hours to completely quell the fire.

The building was used mostly for offices and a classroom. It was scheduled for



photo by Rick Fritsch

HOSEDOWN - Westover firefighters knock down a fire which started in one of the Massachusetts National Guard hangars on the southern end of the airfield shortly before midnight on Aug. 13. Chicopee firefighters also assisted in battling the blaze.

demolition this fall.

The state fire marshal's office said an electrical problem in one of the building's air conditioners caused the fire.

The hangars are located on the south-

ern end of the airfield. They were built in 1952 and formerly housed Air Force F-86 and F-104 fighter-interceptors assigned to airborne alert during Westover's Cold War heyday.

Grand entrance

GRAND OPENING - Lt. Cmdr. Eric D. Cheney, commander of the new MEPS at Westover, speaks to the audience during the building's grand opening on Sept. 8. Seated to Cheney's right are state and base leaders including Congressmen Richard Neal and John Olver and Col. Wade Farris, 439th AW commander.



photo by MSgt. W.C. Pope

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that their contributions are appreciated and very well-known at the highest levels at the Pentagon.

The former aircraft maintainer and 14th chief master sergeant of the Air Force said he was proud to hear that while Westover has the oldest fleet of C-5 aircraft in the Air Force, the wing's mission readiness rates are 20 percent higher than other C-5 units.

His words brought loud cheers from the Patriot Wing crowd in the Base Hangar.

"We can't thank you enough for what you do in contributing to our Air Force," the top chief continued. "There's a lot going on in our force today, clearly, as we're all over the map... I often refer to our reserve and our guardsmen as our national treasure, and you don't abuse a national treasure...we have had many of you activated for years now ... or on and off activation. During my breakfast here I found out that you have been all over the world months at a time. I look at my representation as the Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force not from an

active-duty standpoint but all airmen."

Murray then appeared at the wing's annual Family Day picnic dressed in civilian clothes to fit the occasion. He took time to meet many of Westover reservist's spouses, children and friends.

In addition to visiting several work areas and receiving wing mission briefings, the chief met with several reservists who served overseas during recent operations to better understand deployment challenges from a reserve perspective.

Murray also started each day at 5 a.m. with a work out at the base fitness center and emphasized the importance of physical fitness as a readiness issue. In January, the Air Force will release a new fitness program that incorporates running, sit-ups, and pushups.

Command Chief Sherwin said Murray came away more than impressed with the Patriot Wing's accomplishments.

"He was awed by the fact that so many different squadrons in this wing had won so many awards that were not only for best in AFRC but best in the Air Force," Sherwin said. "I think that it's worthwhile that he will bring back the Westover story to the chief of staff and to other Air Force people."

Murray later thanked the wing for its hospitality and the opportunity to visit Westover.

"To the great men and women here at Westover, the Patriot Wing, I just want to say what a great pleasure it has been to visit here...to have the opportunity also with the wing picnic and to spend some time out there was very special as well. We truly are a total team. We truly have proven that capability and will continue to prove it in the future."

'It climbs like this'



photo by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

GALAXY LESSON - Maj. Rick Tilburg, 337th AS, describes piloting a C-5 to visitors at the Westfield International Air Show on Aug. 17. Pilots with the 337th flew the Westover Galaxy to neighboring Barnes ANGB for the two-day show, which included the U.S. Navy Blue Angels and numerous fly-bys, including another C-5 flown from Westover.

FLU SHOTS INFORMATION: Reservists needing the flu shot will soon receive them at the 439th AMDS medical facility on Walker Avenue. Second Lt. Stacey L. Balicki, OIC of the immunization clinic, reminds those reservists with allergies to the flu vaccine that they need to report to the medical facility to document their allergies. Reservists also need to bring their shot records every time they receive a vaccine. "If you receive a vaccination from a source other than the military, please bring in documentation to the medical squadron to have your shot record updated," Balicki said. For further information on the flu shot schedules this fall, call the immunization clinic at Ext. 2661.



photo by SSgt. Andrew Biscoe

SrA. Sean C. Palmer

Patriot People

Name: Sean C. Palmer
Rank: SrA.
Age: 29
Address: Lenox, Mass.
Unit: 439th ASTS
Position: Aerospace medical specialist
Civilian position: Nurse, Berkshire Medical Center
Favorite food: Pizza
Years of service: Six
Favorite sport: Baseball
Favorite hobby: Skiing
Ideal vacation: Lake Tahoe
Best way to relax: Watch TV
Preferred entertainment: Movies
Favorite hero: General Patton
Favorite music: Rock
Favorite movie: Apocalypse Now
Favorite aircraft: A-10
Pet peeve: Bad drivers
What would I do if I won \$1 million: Tour Europe

Patriot Praises

Promotions:

CMSgt. Brault, Glenn
 SMSgt. Hayford, Albert
 SMSgt. Major, Daniel
 SMSgt. Turner, Tracey T.
 MSgt. Boucher, Lori D.
 MSgt. Bradshaw, Roy T.
 MSgt. Hautanen, Kent W.
 MSgt. Hendricks, Teresa
 MSgt. Paris, Stephen A.
 MSgt. Sandman, Richard
 MSgt. Vanwie, Gary
 MSgt. Williams, Jon-Gary
 MSgt. Zona, Sabatino
 TSgt. Biscoe, Andrew S.
 TSgt. Doe, Robert
 TSgt. Dufrense, Paul Jr.
 TSgt. Epright, Michael
 TSgt. Foust, Shelley
 TSgt. Gambardella, Anthony
 TSgt. Grasso, Mary E.
 TSgt. Guntor, Michael W.
 TSgt. Harnett, William
 TSgt. Kingsbury, Jeffrey D.
 TSgt. Lanzo, David
 TSgt. Mason, Tiffany L.
 TSgt. Morales, Carlos A.
 TSgt. Oliver, Jerome
 TSgt. Rondeau, Michael
 TSgt. Salvatore, Santo
 TSgt. Sharleville, Blair P.
 TSgt. Traugh, Steven E.
 TSgt. Turner, Scott
 SSgt. Adams, Mark A.
 SSgt. Baldwin, Seth
 SSgt. Burwell, John M.
 SSgt. Cook, Lisa A.
 SSgt. Lemay, Brandon H.
 SSgt. Mondriguez, Richard
 SSgt. Vicente, Joao P.
 SrA. Beadle, Daniel D.

SrA. Cohen, Miriam C.
 SrA. Driscoll, Paul H.
 SrA. Dubinsky, Jason
 SrA. Farmer, Eric
 SrA. Johnson, Elizabeth D.
 SrA. Khan, Tania A.
 SrA. Larose, Raymond
 SrA. McKunes, Mark Michael
 SrA. Nieves, Miguel
 SrA. Toth, Stephen A.
 SrA. Valentine, James S.
 A1C Babin, David A.
 A1C Biancardi, Sharon
 A1C Harper, Darrell R.
 A1C Mitchell, Richard

Enlistments:

SSgt. Lambert, Michael G.
 A1C Casey, James M.
 A1C Colon Santos, Sheila E.
 A1C Coye, Ashlee C.
 A1C Fisher, Mary A.
 A1C Kularski, Kelly D.
 A1C Oetegenn, Christoph A.
 A1C Smith, Terri C.
 Amn. Gurski, Richard J.
 AB Busch, Glenn A.
 AB Del Rio, Viktor R.
 AB Del Rosario, Oliver G.
 AB Fernandez, Christina M.
 AB Kraus, Michael P.

Assignments:

Col. Farris, Wallace W., Jr.
 Maj. Dodd, Kenneth W., Jr.
 SMSgt. Rodrigues, Lawrence
 TSgt. Day, Sarita L.
 TSgt. Landers, Melanie S.
 SSgt. Koester, Jenny M.

SrA. Cohn, Breina A.
 SrA. Phillips, Stacey E.
 A1C Soule, Hollie Corrine

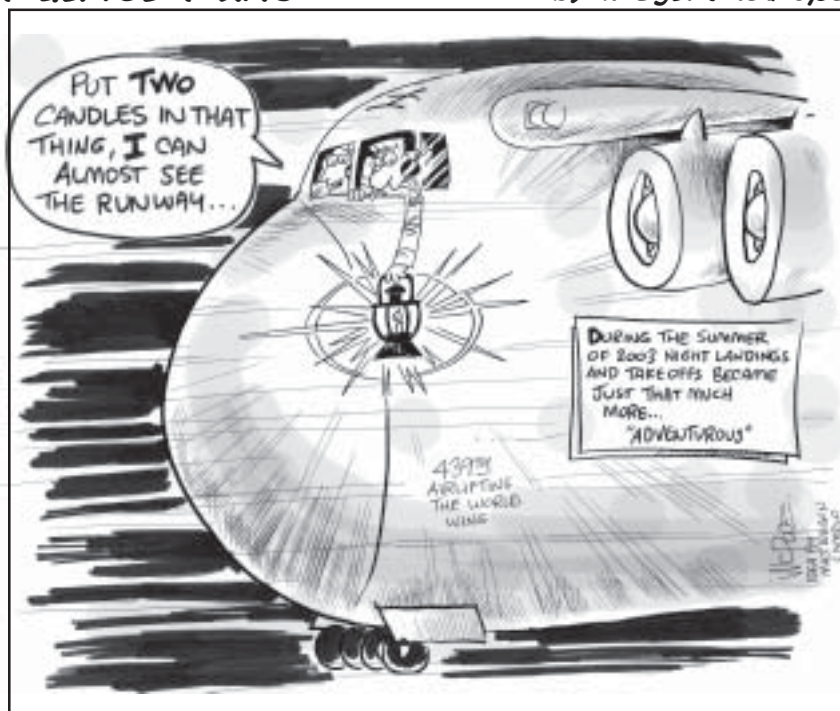
Retirements:

Lt. Col. Cole, Anne
 Lt. Col. Vinskey, Michael A.
 Capt. Chaloux, Elaine M.
 MSgt. Hurley, William P., Jr.

MSgt. Kalisz, Robert F.
 MSgt. Letasz, David J.
 MSgt. Shamett, Serge M.
 TSgt. Anderson, Andrew M., Sr.
 TSgt. Harris, Robert W., Jr.
 TSgt. Pleva, Mark A.
 TSgt. Sadler, David S.
 TSgt. Weagle, James N.

Patriot Puns

by MSgt. W.C. Pope





ONTO WADE LAKE - Kathy Scholpp, Bruce Lamay and Carlos Hill get their canoe into Wade Lake during the fitness challenge, in which they placed third with a time of one hour, 29 minutes.



HOOFIN' IT - Krysta Downs, John MacIntyre, and Dan Ernst keep up the pace. The trio finished second in the fitness challenge with a time of one hour, 27 minutes

- photos by SrA. T.R. Ouellette



THEY'RE OFF- The fitness challenge competitors begin the day from the fitness center. Sandy Whittier, far right, was part of the winning team that also included Thomas Mauzaka and Sue Weis. Their time was one hour, 23 minutes. The challenge consisted of four miles of running, two miles of canoeing, an obstacle course, and about four miles of bicycling.

PATRIOT

www.afrc.af.mil/439aw

October UTA schedule

A UTA Oct. 4-5

B UTA Oct. 18-19



439th AW/PA
WESTOVER AIR RESERVE BASE
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East Wing, Suite 103
CHICOPEE, MA 01022-1825

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